Amendments to the Specification:

On page 14 please replace lines 2-8 with the following text:

[Page 14, lines 2-8] "Alkyl", as well as other groups having the prefix "alk", such as alkoxy and alkanoyl, means carbon chains which may be linear or branched, and combinations thereof, unless the carbon chain is defined otherwise. Examples of alkyl groups include methyl, ethyl, propyl, isopropyl, butyl, sec- and tert-butyl, pentyl, hexyl, heptyl, octyl, nonyl, and the like. ~~Where the specified number of carbon atoms permits, e.g., from C3-10, the term alkyl also includes cycloalkyl groups, and combinations of linear or branched alkyl chains combined with cycloalkyl structures. When no number of carbon atoms is specified, C1-6 is intended.~~

On page 48 please replace lines 6-7 with the following text:

[Page 48, lines 6-7]

Step E: 7-[(3*R*)-3-[(*tert*-Butoxycarbonyl)amino]-4-(2,4,5-trifluorophenyl)butanoyl]-2-(trifluoromethyl)-5,6,7,8-tetrahydro[1,2,4]triazolo~~[4,3-*a*]~~[1,5-*a*]pyrazine

On page 48 please replace lines 25-29 with the following text:

[Page 48, lines 25-29] To 7-[(3*R*)-3-[(*tert*-butoxycarbonyl)amino]-4-(2,4,5-trifluorophenyl)butanoyl]-2-(trifluoromethyl)-5,6,7,8-tetrahydro[1,2,4]triazolo~~[4,3-*a*]~~[1,5-*a*] pyrazine (63.1 mg, 0.12 mmol, from Step E) was added 3 mL of methanol saturated with hydrogen chloride at 0 °C. The reaction was stirred at ambient temperature for 45 min. Concentration gave the title compound as a white solid.

On page 50 please replace lines 15-16 with the following text:

[Page 50, lines 15-16]

Step D: 7-[(3*R*)-3-[(*tert*-Butoxycarbonyl)amino]-4-(2,4,5-trifluorophenyl)butanoyl]-8-methyl-2-(trifluoromethyl)-5,6,7,8-tetrahydro~~[4,3-*a*]~~[1,5-*a*]pyrazine

On page 51 please replace lines 6-10 with the following text:

[Page 51, lines 6-10]

To a solution of 46.4 mg of the slower eluting diastereomer of 7-[(3*R*)-3-[(*tert*-butoxycarbonyl)amino]-4-(2,4,5-trifluorophenyl)butanoyl]-8-methyl-2-(trifluoromethyl)-5,6,7,8-tetrahydro[1,2,4]triazolo~~[4,3-*a*]~~[1,5-*a*]pyrazine from Step D in 15 mL of methanol was added 20 mL of methanol saturated with hydrogen chloride. After 30 min, the reaction was concentrated in vacuo to give the title compound as a white solid.

On page 58 please replace lines 20-21 with the following text:

[Page 58, lines 20-21]

Step E: 7-[(3*R*)-3-[(*tert*-Butoxycarbonyl)amino]-4-(2,4,5-trifluorophenyl)butanoyl]-2-cyclopropyl-5,6,7,8-tetrahydro[1,2,4]triazolo~~[4,3-*a*]~~[1,5-*a*]pyrazine

On page 58 please replace lines 31-34 with the following text:

[Page 58, lines 31-34]

The BOC protecting group was removed from a 42 mg portion of 7-[(3*R*)-3-[(*tert*-butoxycarbonyl)amino]-4-(2,4,5-trifluorophenyl)butanoyl]-2-cyclopropyl-5,6,7,8-tetrahydro[1,2,4]triazolo~~[4,3-*a*]~~[1,5-*a*]pyrazine essentially following the procedure outlined in Example 2, Step E to provide the title compound as a white solid. LC/MS 380 (M+1).

On page 62 please replace lines 1-3 with the following text:

[Page 62, lines 1-3]

Step C: 7-[(3*R*)-3-[(*tert*-Butoxycarbonyl)amino]-4-(2,4,5-trifluorophenyl)butanoyl]- 8-{2-oxo-2-[(phenylmethyl)oxy]ethyl}2-(trifluoromethyl)-5,6,7,8-tetrahydro[1,2,4]triazolo~~[4,3-*a*]~~[1,5-*a*]pyrazine

On page 62 please replace lines 11-19 with the following text:

[Page 62, lines 11-19]

Step D: 7-[(3*R*)-3-Amino-4-(2,4,5-trifluorophenyl)butanoyl]- 8-{2-oxo-2-[(phenylmethyl)oxy]ethyl}2-(trifluoromethyl)-5,6,7,8-tetrahydro[1,2,4]triazolo~~[4,3-*a*]~~[1,5-*a*]pyrazine, trifluoroacetic acid salt

To a solution of 19.7 mg (0.030 mmol) of the slower eluting diastereomer of 7-[(3*R*)-3-[(*tert*-butoxycarbonyl)amino]-4-(2,4,5-trifluorophenyl)butanoyl]-8-{2-oxo-2-[(phenylmethyl)oxy]ethyl}2-(trifluoromethyl)-5,6,7,8-tetrahydro[1,2,4]triazolo~~[4,3-*a*]~~[1,5-*a*]pyrazine from Step C in 1 mL of dichloromethane was added 1 mL of trifluoroacetic acid. After 3 h, the reaction was concentrated in vacuo to give the title compound as clear viscous material. LC/MS 556 (M+1).

On page 62 please replace lines 28-33 with the following text:

[Page 62, lines 28-33]

The deprotected faster eluting diastereomer of 7-[(3*R*)-3-Amino-4-(2,4,5-trifluorophenyl)butanoyl]-8-{2-oxo-2-[(phenylmethyl)oxy]ethyl}-2-(trifluoromethyl)-5,6,7,8-

tetrahydro[1,2,4]triazolo~~[4,3-*a*]~~[1,5-*a*]pyrazine (8.0 mg, 0.014 mmol, from Step D) was hydrogenated under 42 psi hydrogen with 10% palladium on carbon (5.0 mg) as a catalyst in methanol (1.5 mL) at ambient temperature for 18 h. Filtration through Celite followed by concentration gave the title compound as a clear viscous oil. LC/MS 466 (M+1).

On page 64 please replace lines 9-11 with the following text:

[Page 64, lines 9-11]

Step D: 7-[(3*R*)-3-[(*tert*-Butoxycarbonyl)amino]-4-(2,4,5-trifluorophenyl)butanoyl]- 8-[2-(dimethylamino)-2-oxoethyl]-2-(trifluoromethyl)-5,6,7,8-tetrahydro[1,2,4]triazolo~~[4,3-*a*]~~[1,5-*a*]pyrazine

On page 64 please replace lines 19-26 with the following text:

[Page 64, lines 19-26]

Step E: 7-[(3*R*)-3-Amino-4-(2,4,5-trifluorophenyl)butanoyl]- 8-[2-(dimethylamino)-2-oxoethyl]-2-(trifluoromethyl)-5,6,7,8-tetrahydro[1,2,4]triazolo~~[4,3-*a*]~~[1,5-*a*]pyrazine, hydrochloride

To 57.7 mg (0.097 mmol) of the slower eluting diastereomer of 7-[(3*R*)-3-[(*tert*-butoxycarbonyl)amino]-4-(2,4,5-trifluorophenyl)butanoyl]-8-[2-(dimethylamino)-2-oxoethyl]-2-(trifluoromethyl)-5,6,7,8-tetrahydro[1,2,4]triazolo~~[4,3-*a*]~~[1,5-*a*]pyrazine from Step D was added 1 mL of methanol saturated with hydrochloric acid. After 1 h, the reaction was concentrated in vacuo to give the title compound as a white solid. LC/MS 493 (M+1).

On page 67 please replace lines 1-2 with the following text:

[Page 67, lines 1-2]

Step G: 7-[(3*R*)-3-[(*tert*-Butoxycarbonyl)amino]-4-(2,4,5-trifluorophenyl)butanoyl]-2-(difluoromethyl)-5,8-dimethyl[5,6,7,8]-tetrahydro[1,2,4]triazolo~~[4,3-*a*]~~[1,5-*a*]pyrazine

On page 67 please replace lines 10-16 with the following text:

[Page 67, lines 10-16]

Step H: 7-[(3*R*)-3-Amino-4-(2,4,5-trifluorophenyl)butanoyl]-2-(difluoromethyl)-5,8-dimethyl[5,6,7,8]-tetrahydro[1,2,4]triazolo~~[4,3-*a*]~~[1,5-*a*]pyrazine, hydrochloride

To 81.0 mg (0.157 mmol) of the slower eluting diastereomer of 7-[(3*R*)-3-[(*tert*-Butoxycarbonyl)amino]-4-(2,4,5-trifluorophenyl)butanoyl]-2-(difluoromethyl)-5,8-dimethyl[5,6,7,8]-tetrahydro[1,2,4]triazolo~~[4,3-*a*]~~[1,5-*a*]pyrazine from Step G was added 2 mL

of methanol saturated with hydrochloric acid. After 1 h, the reaction was concentrated in vacuo to give the title compound as a white solid. LC/MS 418 (M+1).